

ISRAEL

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2003

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the continued terrorist attacks against Israel.

As we all know the President has recently returned from his first official visit to the Middle East where he attempted to move the peace process forward.

During the summit Israel and the Palestinians agreed to the road map—now comes the hard part.

Progress will be difficult and we must focus now on action, not words. In short, performance matters.

The United States must do more to put pressure on Israel's neighbors and make sure they cease all support of terrorist groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

With 16 Israelis dead from Wednesday's bus bombing, four soldiers killed last weekend, and hundreds of other Israelis dead from Hamas attacks, Israel has the right to protect herself and her people from terrorists.

Hamas and other terrorist groups oppose the road map, they oppose any lasting peace with Israel. They oppose the existence of the Jewish State.

These groups have been tolerated for years by the Palestinian Authority and the PA chairman, Yassir Arafat.

The administration must also increase dialog with our European allies who continue to have relations with Yassir Arafat, as if he were the head of state. Support for Yassir Arafat and his terrorist ways must stop.

More support must be given to Abu Mazen so he can disarm the terrorist groups so Israel can live in safety and security.

There will be no peace and there should be no peace plan until all sides agree that Israel has the right to exist and her people the right to live in safety on the streets, in cafés and on their buses—anything else is a failure that the U.S. should take no part in.

MINNESOTA CITIZENS CONCERNED FOR LIFE

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2003

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life on their 35th anniversary.

MCCL is Minnesota's largest and oldest organization dedicated to preserving the sanctity of human life. It was founded in 1968 with the goal of protecting the lives of the unborn and elderly from conception until natural death. Since then, MCCL has grown from a handful of individuals meeting in their kitchens to 77,000 members in 241 local chapters today.

MCCL works tirelessly to educate the public on the precious nature of life. MCCL is a major force behind efforts to create a culture of life that refuses to accept as common practice euthanasia, human cloning, assisted suicide, and abortion on demand.

Through their efforts, MCCL has allowed thousands to enjoy the banquet of life who otherwise would not have.

I also applaud the vision and leadership of Scott Fischbach, MCCL's new Executive Director.

Mr. Speaker, I salute MCCL for its 35 years of work on behalf of our most vulnerable citizens.

SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2003

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, the Survivor Benefit Plan was, at one time, a good plan intended to provide for surviving spouses of veterans. Unfortunately, that intention has been lost.

Now surviving spouses are experiencing the reality of a one-third drop in benefits when they turn 62 and Congress has yet to take any action on rectifying this wrong.

Well, the time has come for Congress to step up to the plate and provide for our veterans what we already provide to our federal civilian retirees.

I believe the message of this tragic inequality is best conveyed by those who must live with it. I would like to read a statement from a constituent of mine from Riverside, California, Mrs. Marilyn T. Owsley about her experience with the Survivor Benefit Plan:

My husband would turn over in his grave had he known what was happening to me with his annuity. He chose SBP for me to have a decent income along with his Social Security. Also, he liked the idea of this annuity because you get a cost of living increase each year where other types of annuities did not. Together with his Social Security and the SBP annuity, I manage. I rent my apartment and pray they don't increase the rent too much each year. I gave up driving my 1983 Chevy as it was too costly to keep up with repairs and insurance. I have to depend on someone else to go to the store or the doctor. If not for my children, I don't know what I would do. I will be 78 years old on October 9, 2003. They say the Golden Years are good. I say my gold turned to rust. I pray every night the government will do something about this problem of the annuity reduction.

Let's return the benefits to the Survivor Benefit Plan and keep our word to the millions of veterans who, in good faith, signed up for this plan with the expectation of taking care of their loved ones after they passed.

PROVIDING FURTHER CLARITY AS TO THE INTENT OF CONGRESS WITH REGARD TO HR 1904, THE HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, last month, the House passed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act on an overwhelming bipartisan basis. The bill creates a number of new procedures and programs to deal with the nation's exploding forest health crisis. Importantly, Title VI of the bill would authorize and direct federal land

managers to establish early detection programs for insect and disease infestations, with an emphasis on hardwood forests, so that agencies can isolate and treat adverse conditions before they reach epidemic levels.

Even though the bill was first considered and marked up in the Resources Committee, the House Agriculture Committee, under the outstanding leadership of Chairman BOB GOODLATTE, received primary referral. While associating myself with the able and accurate work in the Agriculture Committee's Report on H.R. 1904, as the bill's primary author I want to insert some additional language into H.R. 1904's legislative history so as to provide further clarity as to the intention of Congress in Title VI.

Title VI of H.R. 1904 authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program that uses geospatial and information management technologies (remote sensing imaging and decision support systems) to inventory, monitor, characterize, assess, and identify forest stands (and potential forest stands) in the southern and eastern portions of the United States, with special emphasis on hardwood forest types. The approach for this effort includes utilizing NASA remote sensing technology, emerging geospatial capabilities in research activities, validating techniques using application demonstrations, and integrating results into pilot operational systems. Important issues to be addressed in this region of the U.S. include, but are not limited to, early detection, identification and assessment of environmental threats (insect, disease, invasive species, fire and weather-related risks, other episodic events), loss or degradation of forests, degradation of stand quality due to inadequate forest regeneration practices, quantification of carbon uptake rates, and other counter management practices. Developing a comprehensive early warning system for potential catastrophic environmental threats to Eastern forests would significantly increase the likelihood that managers could isolate and treat any such outbreak before it gets out of control. Such a system could prevent the kind of epidemic, like that of the American chestnut blight in the first half of the twentieth century, which could be environmentally and economically devastating to Eastern forests.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1904 is as important as any environmental legislation that this House has passed in a very long time. Title VI in the bill is a critical piece of that landmark forest health program.

STATEMENT FROM REPRESENTATIVE TOM DAVIS HONORING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF SID YUDAIN, THE ROLL CALL NEWSPAPER FOUNDER

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, "At every dramatic turning point of our long national nightmare known as Watergate, Roll Call was there. Sid Yudain reported the Watergate break-in a full three days before Nixon's resignation," quipped Washington's favorite political satirist, Mark Russell some twenty years ago.